



DCCC Accreditation

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Accreditation provides both public certification of acceptable institutional quality as well as an opportunity and incentive for self-improvement in the institutions accredited. Institutions must be accredited to continue to receive federal funding, such as Pell, Title III, TRIO, and Carl Perkins grants.

Accreditation is also an important factor in strengthening the transfer of our courses to other institutions.

How do we receive Accreditation?

The Higher Learning Commission, with its office in Chicago, accredits degree-granting institutions of higher education. Institutions in Kansas apply through the North Central Association. In the past, DCCC has applied for accreditation using the traditional 10-year program.

Academic Quality Improvement Project (AQIP)

Project (AQIP) is a new path to accreditation. It allows us to receive accreditation *and* establish a system to continually evaluate and improve our institution.

What is the first step in AQIP?

AQIP requires that a college demonstrate a recent self-evaluation. DCCC has chosen Vital Focus to fulfill that requirement because it is a natural lead-in to full accreditation and a good foundation for future planning.

Vital Focus gives everyone at DCCC a chance to evaluate the institution by asking employees what they think is important and what the institution does well.

The first part of Vital Focus will take place **March 15-22** and is called the ***Constellation Survey***. All faculty and staff members at DCCC will be encouraged to complete the 82-question, online, ***Constellation Survey***. The survey is completely confidential and takes about 45 minutes to complete. Individual results will not be revealed.

What happens next?

The collective results of the **Constellation Survey** will be gathered by a computer. Faculty and staff will then be invited to a **Conversation Day on April 20** to discuss the results with one or two outside Facilitators from the North Central Office. At this time, we will select 12-15 items of concern to study over the summer.

In the fall, we will collectively decide on a list of action projects and will arrive at three or four action items to concentrate on. Your input is needed to help decide what matters most at DCCC!

What will the Constellation Survey look like?

For each question, the participants are asked the issue's importance, and if the institution is performing well. Here are 2 examples of questions you will see on the ***Constellation Survey***:

Departments work effectively as teams.

Importance at DCCC right now

Very Important Important Not Important N/A

Current performance at DCCC

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Outstanding Satisfactory Poor N/A

Comments:

DCCC actively encourages innovation.

Importance at DCCC right now

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Very Important Important Not Important N/A

Current performance at DCCC

☐ ☐ ☐ Outstanding ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Satisfactory ☐ ☐ ☐ Poor ☐ N/A

Comments:

Q. Can I complete the survey during working hours?

A. Yes. Your supervisor will work with you to set aside time for you to complete the survey. You may complete it at your desk, or you can go to the LRC computer labs. You can also take the survey at home.

Q. How long does it take to complete the survey?

A. It varies, based on the number of comments provided. The average completion time is around 45 minutes.

Q. Do I have to complete the survey at one sitting?

A. No. When you first start the survey, you will be given a Ticket Number. **Write that number down!** It is the only way you will be able to stop and resume a survey, since no names are recorded. Student lab monitors will be working in the computer lab if you need assistance in completing the survey or have questions.

Q. Do I have to complete it at DCCC?

A. No, you can complete it from home, if you prefer. The survey will be available 24 hours a day from **March 15 – 22.**

Q. In my comments, can I mention someone by name?

A. This is not the forum to single anyone out for praise or criticism. Any comments which do will be dropped.

Q. I don't have a computer at work. How will I complete the survey?

A. The Computer Labs in the LRC will be open from 8 to 5 for you to take the survey if you don't have a computer, or if you prefer a quiet place to focus.

Q. How do I know my answers will be confidential?

A. The survey is housed on a computer in Canada. During the survey, you will be asked your gender, the number of years you've been at DCCC (5 or fewer, 6-10, 11-15, over 15), and the category of your position (faculty, administrator, Program/Technical, or Classified), but not your name. Your answers will be

combined with the responses of everyone on campus so we can get a collective result.

If you still have concerns about confidentiality, you can take the survey at a computer in the Computer Labs in the LRC.

Q. I would like to learn more about the AQIP accreditation process. Is there a web site I can visit?

A. The AQIP web site is **www.aqip.org**.

Q. I'd like to try the survey before I take the live version. Is that possible?

A. Yes, you can go to **www.aqip.org/vitalfocus.html**, and sign on with a password of **trial** to get a feel for the survey.

Q. Is there someone on campus I can talk to about accreditation?

A. You can contact Mike Ahern at ext. 359, Byron Hill at ext. 325, Clark Coker at ext. 228 or Kris Ball at ext. 345. Any of the above would welcome a request to visit committee, division, or department meetings to discuss AQIP and accreditation in more detail.
